

# Eagle Rock Loop

Ouachita National Forest

Page 1 of 8



Hiking: All trails



Biking: All trails



Equestrian:  
Viles Branch



**Trail Highlights:** This trail offers the longest loop trail in Arkansas. A combination of the **Little Missouri**, the **Athens-Big Fork** and part of the **Viles Branch Horse Trail**, this trail travels through the southwestern portion of the Ouachita National Forest. Trail difficulty ranges from easy to most difficult. The trail has numerous river, stream and creek crossings and travels over nine mountains.

## Surrounding Areas:

- **Albert Pike Recreation Area** is closed to all use, including trailhead parking, until further notice.
- **Little Missouri Falls**, a forested picnic area, offers fishing and a trail to a waterfall overlook.
- **Bard Springs**, a 17-unit campground (no utilities) on a scenic stream. No horses.
- **Shady Lake Recreation Area**, another well-developed recreation area on a small scenic lake that offers swimming, camping and fishing opportunities. No horses.
- For more hiking experiences in the area try the **Caney Creek Trails**. Horses allowed.

## For More Information:

Caddo Ranger Station  
912 Smokey Bear Lane  
Glenwood, AR 71943  
(870) 356-4186

**Length:** 26.8 miles - 2 to 3 days travel time one way.

**History:** This trail was developed along a 100 year-old postal route and old wagon roads in partnership with the Forest Service, the Student Conservation Association, Bayou Chapter of the Ozark Society and the Little Missouri Trails Council.

**Surface type:** Unsurfaced.

**Trail Markings:** White rectangles.

**Drinking Water:** Treat all river and stream water before drinking.

**Safety:** Be careful when crossing rivers and creeks during periods of high water.

## Difficulty:

- **Little Missouri:** Hiking and biking-more difficult.
- **Viles Branch:** Equestrian-difficult; Biking and hiking-easy to most difficult.
- **Athens-Big Fork:** Hiking and biking-most difficult.

See note on Page 3 for additional information on trail difficulty.

**Trail Map:** The trail map is divided into 6 sections as shown in the snapshot on page 2 and on pages 3 through 8.

This map is only available in this on-line version.

## SOUTHERN REGION NATIONAL FORESTS

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EAGLE ROCK LOOP

# Eagle Rock Loop

Ouachita National Forest

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## DRIVING DIRECTIONS:

### Albert Pike Recreation Area<sup>①</sup> from Texarkana:

- US-71 north for about 45 miles to US-70,
- US-70 east for about 28 miles to AR-369,
- AR-369 north for about 12 miles to Albert Pike.

### Albert Pike Recreation Area<sup>①</sup> from Hot Springs:

- US-70 west for about 34 miles to AR-84,
- Right (west) on AR-84 for about 13 miles to AR-369 at Langley,
- Right (north) on AR-369 for about 6 miles to Albert Pike.

### Little Missouri/Athens-Big Fork Junction Trailhead<sup>②</sup> from Mena:

- AR-8 southeast for about 1.5 miles to AR-375,
- Right (south) on AR-375 for about 12 miles to Polk County Road 25 (at community of Shady),
- Left (east) on Polk-25 (Polk-25 becomes FSR-25) for about 6 miles to the trailhead at FSR-912.

### Little Missouri Falls Trailhead<sup>③</sup> from Mt. Ida:

- AR-27 south for about 8.4 miles to AR-8,
- Right (west) on AR-8 for about 12 miles to FSR-43 (watch for sign),
- Left (south) on FSR-43 for about 4 miles to FSR-25,
- Right (west) on FSR-25 for about 1/2 mile to FSR-539 and Little Missouri Falls.

### Albert Pike Recreation Area<sup>①</sup> to Little Missouri Falls:<sup>③</sup>

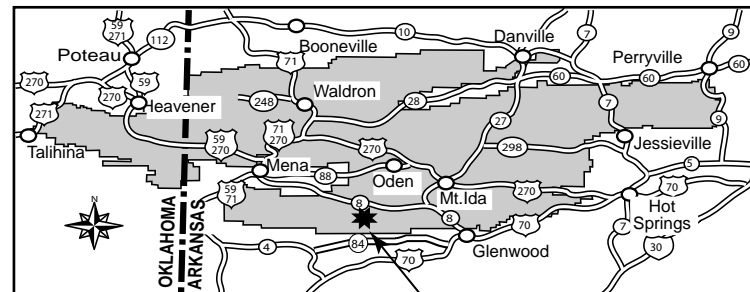
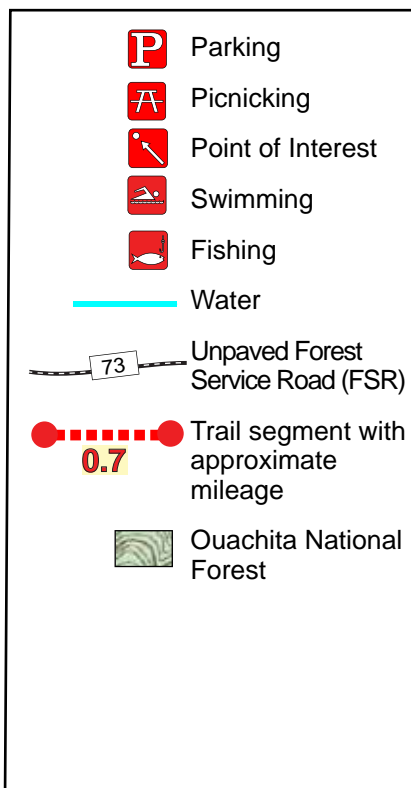
- North on FSR-73 for about 3 miles to FSR-43,
- Left (northwest) on FSR-43 for about 4 miles to FSR-25,
- Left (west) on FSR-25 for about 1/2 mile to FSR-539 and Little Missouri Falls.

### Athens-Big Fork South Trailhead<sup>④</sup> from Texarkana

- US-71 north for about 45 miles to US-70,
- US-70 east for about 15 miles to AR-4 (US-278),
- Left (north) on AR-4 for about 11 miles to AR-84 (at Umpire)
- Right (north) on AR-84 for about 6 miles to AR-246 (at Athens)
- Left on AR-246 to FSR-38
- Right on FSR-38 for about 2 miles to FSR-53800, FSR-B23F and the Trailhead.

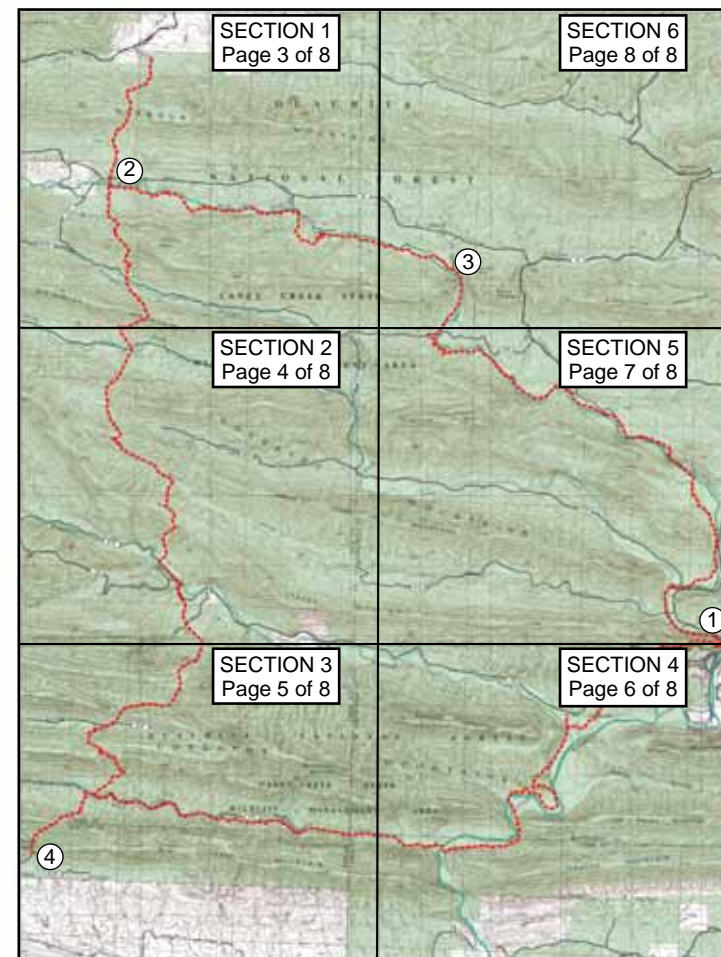
**Starting trailhead:** Start at the trailhead that works best for you. Section numbers are not intended to suggest starting points or direction of travel.

Trail	Sections
Eagle Rock Loop	All
Little Missouri	4, 5, 6 and 1
Athens-Big Fork	1, 2 and 3
Viles Branch (partial)	3 and 4



Trail Location

## Trail Snapshot



\*See Trail Snapshot



# Eagle Rock Loop

Section 1 Page 3 of 8

0 0.5 1 Mile



Athens-Big Fork  
North Trailhead  
GPS: N34.449757  
W093.967144  
UTM 83

Little Missouri/ Athens-Big  
Fork Junction Trailhead  
GPS: N34.433377  
W093.973624  
UTM 83  
About 20 miles to Mena

**ATHENS-BIG FORK TRAIL**  
*NOTE: During the growing  
season, briars and other  
vegetation often encroach  
on trail corridors.*

Eagle Rock Loop is very difficult with a lot of steep and vigorous vertical activity (one leg alone crosses six ridges in eight miles, each between 500 - 800 feet). The Loop also has numerous tricky creek crossings, almost certainly requiring wet crossings in March and April, and one ford of the Little Missouri River that can be 50 yards wide. Many experienced hikers consider the Loop a "test" of hiking skill and about the most difficult Arkansas has to offer. If you think you (and your group or family) can handle all that, the Loop is a great hike with scenery, vistas, a large-volume cascading waterfall, and beautiful bluffs around the Albert Pike recreation area.

Little Missouri River  
Normally depend-  
able water. Treat  
before drinking.

Straight Creek:  
Normally depend-  
able water. Treat  
before drinking.



**HIKING**  
All trails



**BIKING**  
All trails



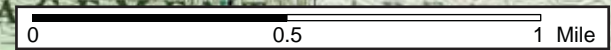
**EQUESTRIAN:**  
Viles Branch

Align with Section 2

Align with Section 6



**Eagle Rock Loop**  
Section 2 Page 4 of 8



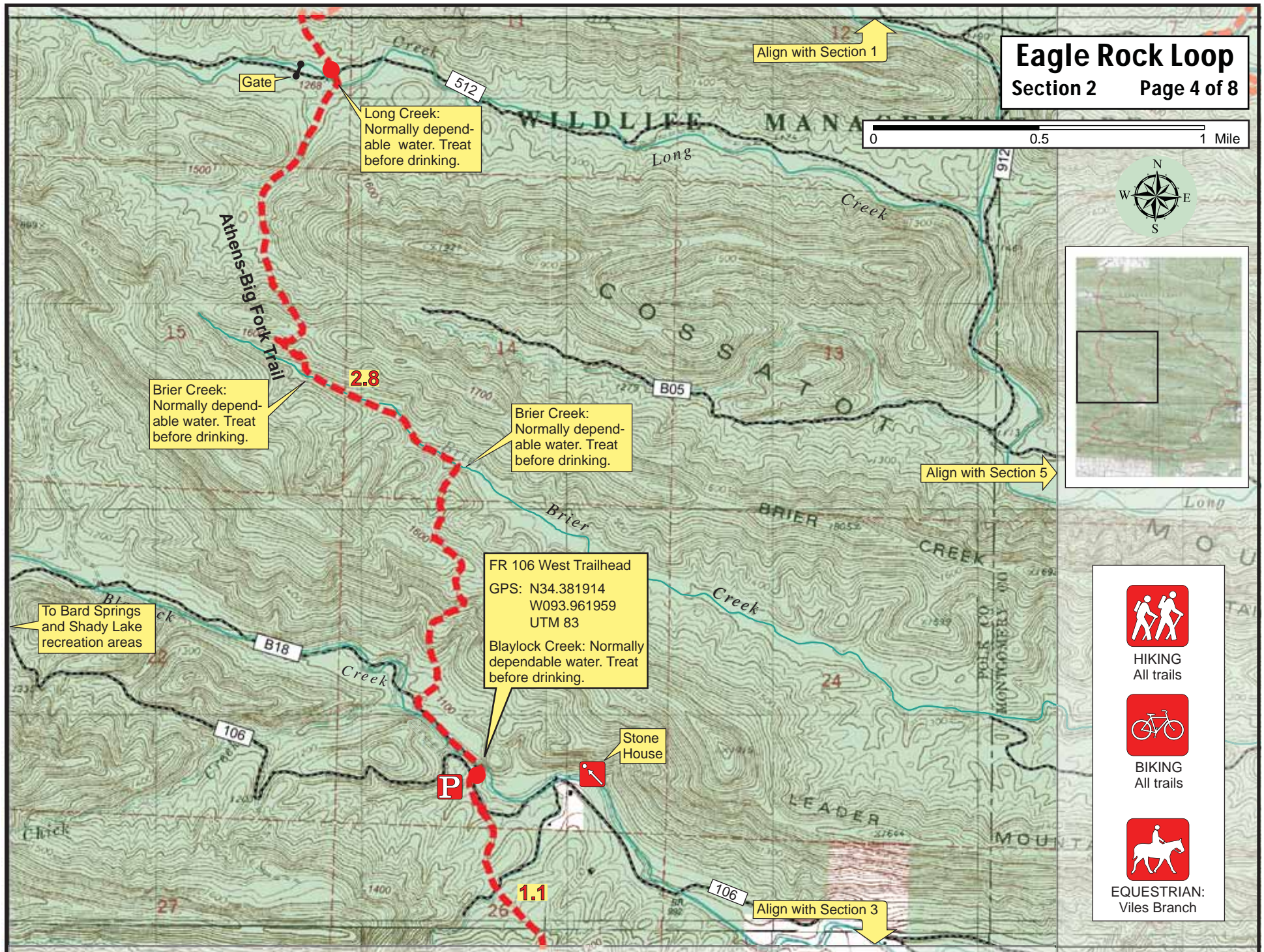
HIKING  
All trails



BIKING  
All trails

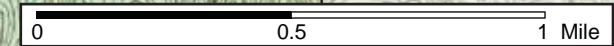


EQUESTRIAN:  
Viles Branch





## Section 3 Page 5 of 8



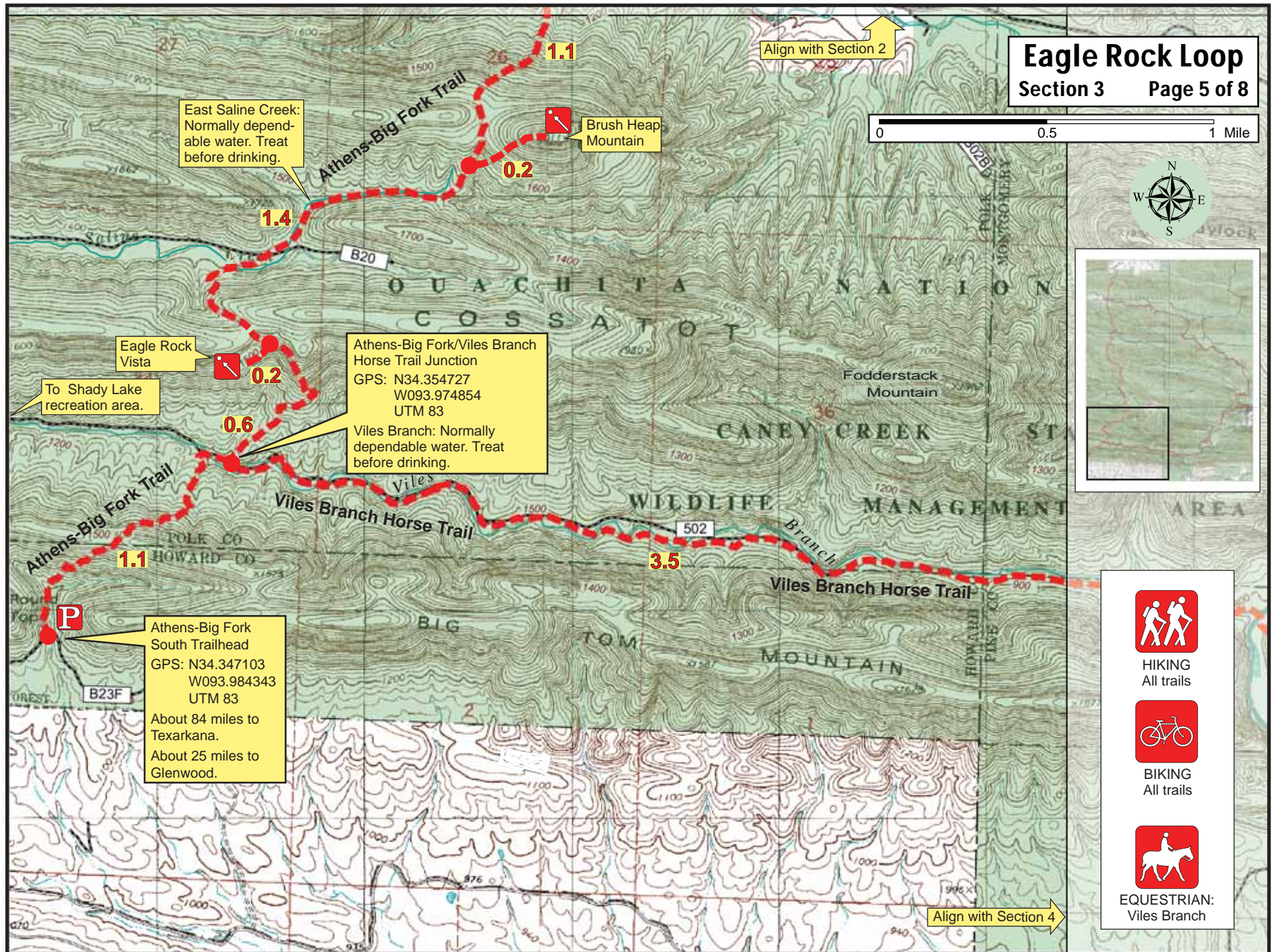
**HIKING**  
All trails



**BIKING**  
All trails



EQUESTRIAN:  
Viles Branch





# Eagle Rock Loop

Section 4 Page 6 of 8

0 0.5 1 Mile



HIKING  
All trails



BIKING  
All trails



EQUESTRIAN:  
Viles Branch

Align with Section 3

Align with Section 5

FR 106 East Trailhead

GPS: N34.365845  
W093.901805  
UTM 83

Camp  
Albert Pike  
Commercial  
Campground

2.0

2.8

River crossing:  
May be hazardous  
during high water.

River crossing:  
May be hazardous  
during high water.

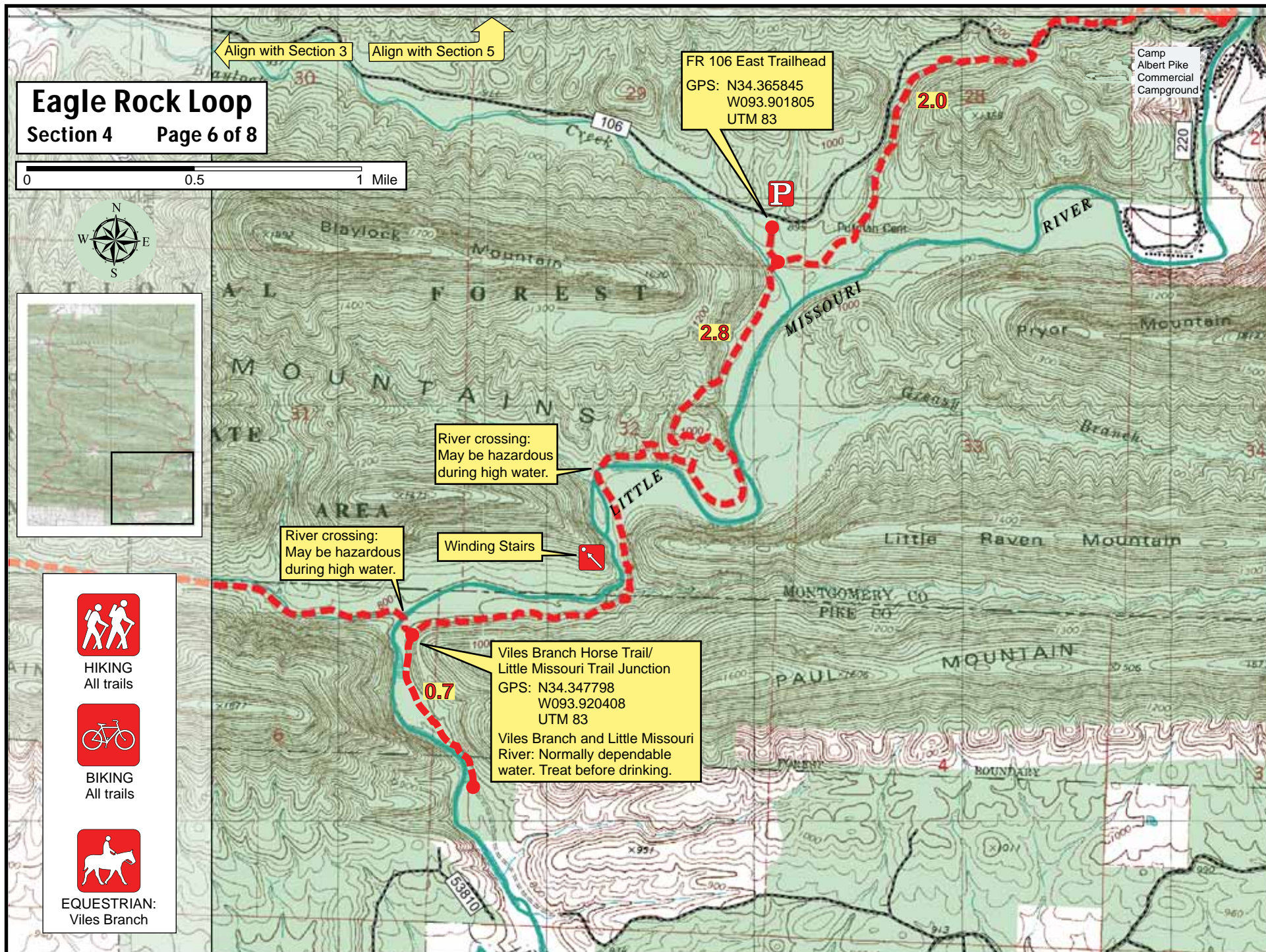
Winding Stairs

0.7

Viles Branch Horse Trail/  
Little Missouri Trail Junction

GPS: N34.347798  
W093.920408  
UTM 83

Viles Branch and Little Missouri  
River: Normally dependable  
water. Treat before drinking.





# Eagle Rock Loop

Section 5 Page 7 of 8

0 0.5 1 Mile



HIKING  
All trails



BIKING  
All trails



EQUESTRIAN:  
Viles Branch

Align with Section 6

River crossing:  
May be hazardous  
during high water.

Little Missouri River:  
Dependable year-  
round water. Treat  
before drinking.

River crossing:  
May be hazardous  
during high water.

6.3

Align with Section 2

Albert Pike Recreation Area

GPS: N34.225406  
W093.530536  
UTM 083

About 6 miles to Langley

Albert Pike Recreation is  
closed to all use until  
further notice.

Align with Section 4



## Section 6 Page 8 of 8

## Section 6

Page 8 of 8



**HIKING**  
All trails



**BIKING**  
All trails



EQUESTRIAN:  
Viles Branch

River crossing  
(bridge)

## 4.1

River crossing  
(bridge)

## 6.3

Align with Section 1

Align with Section 5

## Little Missouri Falls Trailhead

GPS: N34.422745

W093.919383

UTM 83

Picnic facilities. No camping.  
About 24 miles to Mt. Ida.



## Round Mountain

STATEHOUSE

MOUNTAIN